BR
1715
.K56M4

N° 257

Deposited Oct 17. 1839

By Paul Beck Jr

Treasurer &c

as Prop.

Library of Congress.

Chap. BR 1715

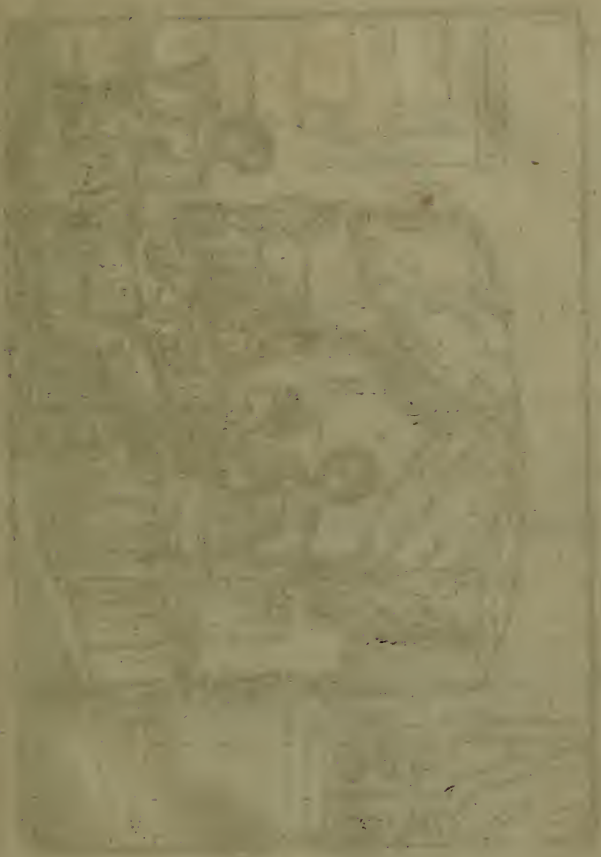
Shelf .K56M4

Copyright No.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

U. S. Rec'd. 15th May 1820.

No. 1105



See page 28.

MEMOIR

OF

MARY KING;

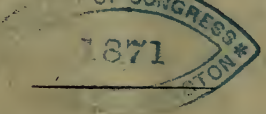
WHO DIED IN

ROCHESTER, MASS.

MARCH 3d, 1839.

"He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." *Isa.* xl. 11.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.



AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,
PHILADELPHIA:
No. 146 CHESTNUT STREET.

c/1839

BR1715
.K56M4

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1839, by PAUL BECK, Jr., Treasurer in trust for the American Sunday-school Union, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

3613

2260768

MEMOIR

OF

MARY KING.

It was a beautiful prayer, which is said to have been offered by one of the little daughters of a missionary, "make me, dear Saviour, the best little lamb in all thy flock." Such a prayer must have been uttered, I think, by the little girl whose short history I am about to relate for the benefit of those who knew and loved her, and for all who are just setting out in the journey of life.

Mary King was born in Rochester, a town in the eastern part of Massachusetts, September 11th, 1826. Her character from her earliest childhood

was uncommonly lovely. She appeared different in many respects from other little children. If her playthings were taken from her, instead of pouting and crying, she quietly submitted; if treated with unkindness, she never resented it, but appeared grieved, and would walk into another room where she could be by herself: in no instance did she return "evil for evil."

From very early age, Mary's obedience was most exact. She did not wait to be told twice to do a thing, but instantly went to do as she was desired. No instance of direct disobedience is recollected by those who had the care of her.

Mary had a pleasant, but thoughtful expression of countenance. It told, very expressively, that within her bosom was a soul which must live forever; and that she had a few years only to do the work of life.

Religious conversation was of all things most agreeable to her.

others spoke of God, of heaven, or eternity, little Mary's ear was ever attentive, and at this early period she began to improve the opportunities given her to seek her Saviour, and prepare for heaven. Nor did she seek in vain, for He who left this sweet promise, "They who seek me early shall find me," very soon drew near to this little one, and probably ere half her short life was spent, sealed her for his own.

Mary's love of truth was remarkable. The Bible tells us of *God's "paths of truth."* It was when walking in these pleasant "paths" that Mary found her God, her Saviour, her home in heaven. When she was four years old, an affecting circumstance took place, which I will relate to you.

Sometimes, you know, mischief is done in a family by some one: a nice article of furniture is cut or injured, or a pane of glass is broken, and no one can tell how it happens. Some-

thing of this kind took place. Great injury was done to several articles of valuable furniture, which no person would be supposed capable of doing, except little Mary, and she was too young to know that such conduct is highly improper. All the children were questioned, and it was thought impossible that either of the others could do such mischief. Mary was accused of doing it, but she said, calmly, "I did not, father. I do not know any thing about it." What was to be done?

New articles were purchased, and they shared the same fate. Her parents said, "our little Mary never did any thing of this kind: she never told a lie, but this may be the first time. We cannot have things so ruined. What can we do?"

They thought about it long, for they could not bear to lay their hand on the dear child, who had never yet deserved the rod. At last her father, in the sorrow of his heart, said, "Mary,

I must punish you for this mischief. I *know* the other children are innocent. I do not certainly know that you are. Confess it, my child, and I will forgive all; otherwise I must do as I have said." Again the trembling little one said, "Father, I did not." For she chose to receive the punishment rather than tell a lie!—After it was inflicted, she looked in her father's face with conscious innocence, as she firmly repeated "I did not," so that her father was completely satisfied that the punishment was undeserved. I scarcely need say, it was the only time in her life that she received chastisement. As she lay on her deathbed, she spoke of this circumstance, and remarked, that her "father did quite right, although she was innocent," tenderly wishing to spare him any self-reproach after she was gone. It was not, however, until Mary was laid in the grave that the truth was fully revealed, and it was proved

that not only Mary, but all the children were innocent.

Mary was very kind. She was ever ready to favour others rather than herself. It was a part of her constant study to oblige in little things. This attractive grace which leads a little child to choose to give up its own pleasures and comforts to make another happy, seems very much like that love which overflows in the heart of the Saviour. Hence, we are much inclined to believe that little Mary was from the first a "lamb of the Great Shepherd," whom "He carried in his arms" all the way, although she did not know it until she was older.

Mary lived several miles from the place of worship, and therefore was often obliged to stay at home, as all the family could not be accommodated in the carriage; but she never complained. Twice only was she ever seen in tears when thus denied. As she was so gentle and amiable, her

young companions loved to have her visit them, but when her mother thought proper to refuse such invitations, Mary never pouted or complained, but cheerfully submitted. Who can number the instances of kindness and self-denial in the history of such a child, who acts daily and hourly under the influence of this blessed principle of love to all.

Little Mary was a pattern of neatness; and you will generally observe that those children, who are trying to be the best little lambs in the fold, resemble her in this point. If you look much at the works of God, you see, in every thing, the perfection of neatness, taste, and beauty. Examine the cells of the bee, the tints of the rose, or the wings of the insect. Order and regularity are seen everywhere, except where sin has destroyed them.

When Mary retired at night, her clothes were folded neatly, and laid just where she could find them in the morning. Nothing that belonged to

her was out of order; her dolls' clothes were nicely washed and ironed by her own little hands, and then laid carefully by for use. Her playhouse was as neat as wax. She seldom tore her clothes, because her motions were very gentle; but if she did, her needle was ready to repair the injury, or, if it was too difficult, she would take it directly to her sisters, or mother. Her little toys were never destroyed, for Mary would say, "if I do not wish for them now, I may some other time; or, perhaps, some other little girl may like to have them, and, mother, it is not right to waste any thing that will be good for any thing to anybody."

It was so common for Mary to be employed, that it is difficult for her friends to remember that she had any idle moments. Ever ready to assist in useful employment, she liked also to exercise her taste and ingenuity in various kinds of needle-work. Indeed this was her favourite occupa-

tion until within two days of her death.

In the autumn of 1832, when Mary was six years old, her friends observed that her mind was more deeply impressed with divine things than ever before. The following winter a little girl, of nearly her own age, came to reside with her, to attend the family school under the charge of her eldest sister. It was a pleasant circumstance that Mary found in her a sympathizing friend. Together did these little ones daily kneel in prayer. Together did they delight to sing the love of their Redeemer; and they studied and played together in the sweetest affection.

You will notice in this and other things in Mary's history, how kindly the good Shepherd arranged every circumstance to help this "little lamb" on her way to heaven.

In the spring of 1834, a revival of religion took place in the church and congregation where her parents

worshipped. Mary had before seen her two elder sisters and a brother also, choose the service of God, and profess His name before men. Another sister was now in deep anxiety, inquiring "what she should do to be saved;" but a scene still more affecting was before her. Her father, for whom she cherished great reverence and love, was filled with anguish, in view of his sins against a holy God!—Mary looked on with wonder and amazement: — "If," thought she, "my beloved father needs a change, do not I? If my father, who I think always does right, feels himself such a sinner; am not I one?" But when the forgiving love of the Saviour entered his soul, and peace came to his troubled mind; when the child beheld the family collecting around the altar, now for the first time erected in that dwelling; when she heard from the lips of her father the voice of praise and supplication, her heart was ready to break, she so

longed to feel as he did, and know from experience that peace which God only can give. The first supplication from that family altar arose to heaven, and brought a blessing on the little child who knelt before it! What a lesson for fathers! For a short time Mary felt the deepest distress, but soon she was filled with joy and gratitude to Him who had forgiven her iniquities, and blotted them out, as she hoped, forever.

In Mary's dying hour, she said, "that prayer of her father's was the means of bringing her to Christ." What days of happiness, what hours of joy were given to her, no one knows but the Saviour, who led her on, through the few remaining years of her journey.

The following summer Mary attended a neighbouring school, and here she was an example of meekness, gentleness, and forbearance. It would be delightful to gather the testimony from her young companions, who love

to tell what Mary was in school. "If," say they, "we had difficulties among ourselves, we carried them to Mary. She would always settle them, and we thought what she said was always right." She was the gentle peacemaker; and by continually manifesting the spirit of Christ, which is very meek and lowly, Mary could easily persuade her companions to unite in her favourite employments, as I shall tell you. It is worth our while to remember, that it is much easier to influence others by example than by precept. If we show to our companions the lovely spirit of Christ in our conduct, we shall find it will affect them more than any thing we can say.

I have told you how happy Mary was in her God and Saviour. She loved to walk among her flowers and mark the delicate touches of her Father's hand, and breathe the sweet perfume which seemed to her like the air of heaven. She loved to notice

the different leaves, and trace their varied beauty with her pencil. She delighted in the music of the birds, as they sent up their morning song; and the green earth, and the shady forest, and the rippling brook and the blue sky were all dear to Mary. All were her Father's work.

She could enjoy, too, the cheerful sports of her companions; and in the hours of recess, when the children were amusing themselves in erecting arbours or grottos in the adjoining forest, she was ready to assist them with her taste and skill. But Mary had discovered that there was something better than all these, and, leaving her little friends, she would take the hand of one, and together they would glide away into some lonely spot, in the deep shade, where they would kneel and pray to their heavenly Father. Who knows but the comforts which clustered around her bed of death, making her pillow soft and easy, were laid up here! It was

just what she would have done, had she known how soon she was to lie down in the grave. But Mary did not know it, for it was in her bloom and freshness, when joy smiled in all her steps, that she so loved to turn aside to commune with her Saviour. O! I think, if the angels ever visit our world, they must have surrounded those infants in that silent retreat. Those prayers surely went up into the ear of Him who ordains praise from the mouth of babes! At such moments she could sing with the young shepherd of Israel, as he led his flock "in the green pastures and by the still waters"—"Thou hast made me full of joy with thy countenance." Have we ever known such joy as this?

We have seen that in early life, Mary was a child of truth, obedience, submission, industry, neatness, &c., but there were other traits which became more remarkable, after she had been fully taught of God. When a

person has given his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in his bosom. This is true of little children also. He takes up his abode, and makes the soul of a child his home, his dwelling-place. This accounts for many things in a pious child's conduct, which are altogether unlike those which proceed from the natural heart.

You have noticed in a company of children, some one more beautifully dressed than others. This is particularly true in the country, where all classes mingle together. In such companies it is often the case, that a few are poorly clad in comparison with the rest, their parents being unable to dress them better. Mary was always very neatly, but plainly dressed; her parents rightly judging, that the sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks of childhood need no ornament.

One afternoon a few of Mary's companions came to visit her, among whom was a little girl arrayed in very

rich and gay attire. She observed the contrast between her own dress and that of her companions, and very soon separated herself with an air of pride from her associates, and took Mary's arm. Mary instantly saw what was proper to be done, and, instead of being pleased with the distinction intended, she gently extricated herself from her companion, and returning to the rest of her little company, succeeded in soothing their feelings, which had been somewhat disturbed by the conduct of the vain little girl. And thus it was ever her delight to avoid censure on the one hand, and take the part of the injured on the other. After they were gone, she expressed much sorrow at the conduct of the poor child, who was certainly to be pitied for her finery, which so much diminished her enjoyment.

When Mary heard a remark made against any absent person, it was her custom to take his part. Even the

abandoned and wicked were objects of her compassion, and not of her censure. In the school of Christ, Mary was taught to "speak evil of none," and "to be kind to the evil and unthankful." It was a charming trait of character, and a very good test, by which all may decide whether they have the spirit of Christ or not. Do we endeavour, as she did, always to think well of the motives of others, and judge with kindness of their conduct?

It is a very easy thing to lose a Sabbath. Only let the thoughts wander here and there, and let the eyes rove to and fro in the house of God, without setting a watch at the door of the heart, and Satan will come in with his foolish suggestions, and the Sabbath, with its golden opportunities, will slip away. Mary was careful not to lose her Sabbaths. She prized them as seasons of improvement, when she could obtain knowledge and strength to go on in her

Christian course. Her companions remember the thoughtful expression of her large dark eye, as she sat in the corner of the pew in the house of God, earnestly gazing at the preacher, as if she would not lose a word. Yes, and in the Sabbath-school, Mary was never found, without a lesson thoroughly prepared. Her teacher often spoke of her serious and earnest attention to instruction, and of the beauty of her example in the class. But, although she so loved the worship of God, she was often deprived of its privileges. On one occasion, when she did not expect to go to meeting, her mother asked her if she would like to go? With tears of joy, she replied, "Mother, you know I always wish to go to meeting." But to satisfy Mary's thirst for instruction, and to aid the other members of the family, her parents conducted a Sabbath-school at home; and through the remaining years of sickness and suffering, Mary was permitted to en-

joy at home the sweet exercises of prayer, praise and study of the Bible, which her more healthful and favoured companions could enjoy at school.

At the age of eleven, Mary's health began to decline, and during the remainder of her life she was seldom able to attend church, or even walk abroad. Before this period, the providence of God brought to the family an aunt, who was much distinguished for her piety, and who was very ill. Here she came to close her days: affording to the little pilgrim a bright illustration of the manner in which a Christian could die; she lingered many months in great suffering, supported and cheered by the presence of her Saviour. In her sick-room, Mary passed many delightful hours, reading to her aunt and conversing with her of eternal things. She saw her descend to the grave, and was present when her triumphant spirit departed to the skies. It was a frequent remark of the dying woman,

that "Mary would quickly follow, and that the divine Spirit was preparing the child for a higher society and nobler employments."

Mary continued feeble until the winter of 1837–38, when she was obliged to quit her school; but she was so much attached to books, that she could not give up study. Every day she voluntarily committed her lessons and recited them to her sisters, and during the last summer of her life, her lessons were a part of her daily employment. While confined almost wholly to her bed, she had a lesson ready to recite whenever her sister could attend to her.

Natural Philosophy was one of her favourite studies. Indeed, most of her exercises showed an uncommonly mature mind. One often forgot, while conversing with her, that she was in years but a child; and her physician remarked, that he "very rarely met with a patient of adult age, who could give so clear and distinct an account

of her case, and the symptoms of disease as Mary did. Her Bible was always at her side. She often conversed freely in relation to her feelings, and exhibited perfect resignation to the will of God, whether it be that she should live or die.

In the latter part of November, she appeared unusually dejected, and on inquiry it appeared that her evidence of piety seemed, in her own view, quite gone, and the comforts which so long cheered her spirit had departed. The views of her sinful heart were very distressing. She doubted her sincerity, and it seemed as if the adversary was permitted to perplex and grieve her continually with fears. She complained that she could not keep her mind on her Saviour, nor upon the great truths of God's word as formerly. Long and anxiously did her parents pray that she might again enjoy the light of God's countenance, which had so often made her glad.

At length her mother said, "Why

should you distress yourself so, Mary? I think you love God; if you do not, why should you so delight in the society of Christians? Why should you love prayer and your Bible! You should consider, Mary, God has helped you to be a very lovely, obedient child. You know you never told a falsehood, or willingly disobeyed your parents, and how can you think yourself the greatest of sinners?" "Mother, I know it," replied the weeping child, "but that is not the thing. My heart is no better than others—I fear my motives are selfish. My prayers, I fear, are only a form. If I had been placed in the circumstances of others, my life might have been just as wicked. God looks at the heart, mother."

It was during this severe trial that the writer was requested to call and see her. I found little Mary bathed in tears. Her Saviour was gone. I repeated the precious promises to her, but no argument or promise

seemed to relieve her. She reasoned with the accuracy of an enlightened adult, and I sat wondering, why it was, that the Shepherd had forsaken this "little lamb." As I repeated some encouraging words from the Bible, "O, yes," she said, I know them all. They are all true, but I fear they do not apply to me."

"Mary," said I, "you have lived a life of prayer?"

She paused a moment, and replied, "Yes, the form of prayer, but I fear it was not from the heart."

"Well, you *are* sincere *now*, Mary?" "Yes, I know that of all things in the world, I desire to be God's dear child."

But the night was short with Mary. The morning dawned. Her doubts and fears fled before the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and she now condemned herself for even doubting the truth and love of such a friend as Christ.

During the last weeks of Mary's

life she occupied herself with some favourite needle-work. Lying prostrate on her bed, she executed, with great neatness and taste, many little articles, such as needle-books, cushions, &c. for gifts of remembrance. She loved this employment exceedingly. One morning her sister was reading an account of a little girl who had long been confined to her bed, and who employed herself in a similar way, who was also a very pious child. "I am glad to hear that," exclaimed Mary, "for I have been troubled about my love of sewing. You know it is written, 'Little children, keep yourselves from idols.' I do not wish to make an idol of it, but when employed, my thoughts seem more fixed on God than when I am doing nothing." Her sister, who was her constant attendant, spent much time in reading aloud in Pilgrim's Progress, memoirs of pious children, and other similar works. But the Bible she loved best of all. "O, Elizabeth, how I love

that book," said Mary earnestly one morning, as her sister opened it to read. "Can you make these promises all your own?" asked Elizabeth. "O yes, I love to think of them and my Saviour." After a young friend, who passed the night had left her, she said, "I wish Mary had conversed more. I delight to hear her talk, because she is a Christian, and she loves to talk about religion."

Sometimes she would desire her sister to "read a chapter and ask her questions, to see if she understood it," thus making it the food of her soul.

No complaint escaped her lips during these weeks of wasting sickness, nor, indeed, was she known to complain from the first. In her prayers she thanked God, for "laying His hand on her so lightly, and that she was spared the severe pain which others felt." But I hasten to the closing scene.

On Sabbath, a week before her death, her mother was sitting by, as

the family had not yet returned from meeting, and remarked, "It is hard to be sick, Mary." "O, no mother, if we have the Saviour with us, it is easy. I do not find it hard at all." A long conversation ensued, in which she expressed, with great clearness, her present expectations of happiness. She spoke much of her past life, and the comforts which had been scattered along her path; of the sweet hours with her dear companions, of the happy family prayer-meetings held on Saturday evening in her aunt's sick-room. During this conversation, her father entered, and took the Bible to read. "Father," said she, "will you pray now, and not defer it till the usual hour? I wish to have you do it now, before my mind is drawn away from my Saviour!

"What shall I pray for, Mary?" said her father.

"That I may be resigned to the will of God, and have more faith." When the prayer had been offered, her fa-

ther said, "Did you enjoy it as you expected, Mary?"

"Yes, and by an eye of faith I see the Beautiful City. Father, I see the great white throne. And I can see, too, my Saviour hanging on the cross for sinners."

"Mary, you will soon be in that City," said her father, "for to human appearance you can continue but a short time. Are you willing to die?" She looked up sweetly, and replied, "If I could have it just as I wished, I would stay a little longer; but I am perfectly willing to go, if it is the will of God. I feel no fear when I think of my body being put in the ground; but do not weep so, dear father and mother, for it cannot save my life." "Mary," said her father, "you know you are our dear child, and we cannot help feeling sorrow at parting." "I know it, father, but I can as well go now as at any time. It gives me no sorrow to hear you say, that I must

die. I cannot weep, although I love you all." She then looked up to her mother and said, "I wish we could have a prayer-meeting, such as we used to have." A number of friends came in, and never will they forget that scene. There lay the wasted form of little Mary, her lips speaking with emphasis of the love and goodness of her Saviour; her soul reviewing all the way in which she had been led, down to this hour of peace and joy, and like the saints and prophets in all past ages, speaking of His wonderful faithfulness.

At length the spectators of this interesting scene retired, leaving only Elizabeth with her. She inquired of Mary if she was not greatly fatigued? "Yes, in body, but not in mind. I could say much more, but it is not best now, perhaps. Do not weep so, dear Elizabeth; but though you weep now, you will rejoice; I know you will, for the Bible says you shall."

She then requested her sister to unite with her, while she poured out her soul to God in prayer.

That night she rested comfortably, but was too low the next morning to read as usual in the Bible, and her sister read to her. She then expressed a desire to pray with her mother and sister, and on being asked, if the others should be called in, said she had no objection. In this prayer none were forgotten. An absent brother was tenderly remembered. A faithful domestic also, who had lived many years in the family, was fervently commended to God. She "could not bear," she said, "to have C. lost. She must go to Christ and be saved."

In the course of the day, her aunt and her sisters came in to see her. Mary saw they were deeply affected by her altered appearance, and she entreated them not to weep. "Do not be silent, but sew and talk as usual: you see there is nothing to

fear. Why should you be agitated, and be afraid of death? I am not."

After this she spoke but little, and that in whispers.

The day before she breathed her last, I called once more to see her. Her mother met me with a smile. "Are you not exhausted?" I inquired. "O, no, I have indeed much to do, but no anxious cares. All is well with Mary. There is nothing to fear for her." I entered the chamber of death, for it was evident that the last enemy was there, and Mary's end was at hand. She was pale and emaciated to a great degree; but very sweet were her accents, as she replied to my inquiry "how she was?"—"More feeble, but happy." "All is well, Mary?" "Yes, I trust so."

She had a comfortable night. The next morning, as her mother offered to her lips a tea-spoonful of cold water, she fell back, and like an infant gently closed her eyes in death.

ORIGINAL LINES BY A YOUTHFUL FRIEND OF MARY'S.

A TENDER lamb was seen below,
An heir of sin and death and wo;
The blessed Shepherd heard it sigh,
And love shone mildly in his eye.

He laid it softly to his breast,
And soothed its little woes to rest;
"This lamb is mine," he gently said,
And breath'd a blessing on its head.

A few short years on earth it dwelt,
Its Shepherd's love and kindness felt;
He guarded it from every fear;
In danger's hour was always near.

Death lays his hand upon it now,
A mortal paleness clothes its brow;
But see! beneath its drooping head,
The Shepherd's gracious arm is laid!

He bears it on, through death's cold flood,
All purified by his own blood,
Presents it at his Father's throne,
And God accepts it as his own.

THE END.

RR
715

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 019 971 792 3